

REMARKS OF HONORABLE JOHN E. FOGARTY, M.C. 2ND DISTRICT, R. I. AT  
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL ASSOCIATION DINNER ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1958  
AT THE CROWN HOTEL.

At this gathering tonight--held in recognition of National Cleaner Air Week, which the President has proclaimed--interest naturally focuses on the air pollution problems of our New England cities and towns. As a citizen of this region and of the State of Rhode Island, I share your concern with the problem as it affects our communities. I am disturbed, as are you, lest air pollution here reach into our homes, our offices, our industries, with its corroding fingers, shedding its pall of economic and civic blight. I am greatly disturbed over increasing reports of the harmful effects of air-pollution on human health -- effects whose extent is not yet fully known, but which are now suspected even of being a factor in causing cancer.

The problem is not a local one. It is nation-wide. And with our constantly increasing industrialization, transportation and urbanization, the problem of air-pollution will inevitably become more severe.

As a representative of this State in the Congress of the United States for the past 18 years, and as chairman of the subcommittee concerned with appropriations for the Departments of Labor and of Health, Education, and Welfare for the past 8 years, I have worked for a nation-wide attack on this problem. This year the Congress appropriated \$3,860,000 for air pollution control. And as you know, there is to be a National Conference on Air Pollution in Washington next month. It is hoped that a unified 10-year plan of action will result.

Yet I have not been willing to wait for action until a 10-year plan is developed. I have constantly urged the Public Health Service in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare that they push ahead as fast as possible under the Federal Air Pollution Act of 1955 to stem this rising tide of pollution of the atmosphere, pollution which is both an economic and a health hazard.

I know that they have been making good progress, especially in measuring and identifying the various things--particles, chemicals, and so on--which contaminate our air. There is now a collaborative nation-wide network of air sampling stations with equipment provided by the Federal Government, but operated by local authorities. We have two such stations here in the city of Providence. Samples collected at these stations are studied and analyzed, to find just what and how much harmful ingredients the air contains. On the basis of such findings, action to remove the most dangerous and most numerous air contaminants can be taken by the communities.

Some 80% of the funds appropriated by the Congress for air pollution control this year is going into research on the many and complex aspects of the problem. Some is being used for technical consultation with State and community authorities on their particular problems. We have had such consultations with national authorities on the subject here in our State of Rhode Island, and I am sure similar consultations have been held in the other New England States. In addition, training activities are under way to increase the number and competence of personnel in the field of community air pollution.

I think a good beginning has been made, nationally and locally, on this problem. I think we are moving ahead, and I am sure that with the support and interest of groups such as are represented here tonight, and of organizations such as this New England Section of the Air Pollution Control Association, we shall make even greater progress in the future. I can assure you that I, for my part, will not cease my efforts to protect the air that we and our children breathe and to see that it is freed of the pollution that now makes it a source of domestic worry, economic loss and health impairment.